

Whitchurch House,
Oxfordshire
(near Reading)
March 3. 1860

My dear Mr Collier,

I have been very
ill for a long time, and have not been
able to attend to any literary matters,
but I cannot refrain from writing
one line to you to assure you of my
entire sympathy under the very pro-
voking and unjustifiable attack that
has been made upon you relative to
your annotated Shakespeare. My know-
ledge of you (and your justly-deserved
high literary character) entirely removes
any suspicion of unfair play on your
part. I have not read the controversy
further than brief notices in some
of the weekly papers. If the MSS notes
were written in pencil first, and
afterwards rewritten, that does not

prove that you wrote them, and I
am fully persuaded that (1) you
bought the book of Rodd, and (2) that
it is exactly in the state that you
bought it. It is not at all improbable
that the notes were originally (perhaps
at the time of, or near, the publication
of the volume) ~~written~~ ^{and that some}
written in pencil, and that some
subsequent paper or to preserve them
wrote over them. I think I could
lay my hand upon a similar
manipulation in volumes in my
own library.

It would be great presumption in
me to lay much pretension to
literary acquirements, but I think
I have some, and no little knowledge
of our earlier literature. I write
then this that, when you and I
are long in our graves, your family
and our successors may know
that at least one literary man

who has edited ^a not inconsiderable
work of the Elizabethan period, &
whose studies have been mainly
of that age, firmly believed your
bona fides in the whole transaction.
When I am able to get out, I will
come to Maidenhead and have
a chat with you. I have been
suffering from inflammation of
the knee and a varicose vein which
have sadly pulled me down.

My wife and I will be most
happy to see you whenever you
like to run down to this charming
place. Some months ago I found
some of our poor friend Mitford's
books at a stall, and bought
them for as many pence as he,
probably, gave pounds for them.

Believe me,

My dear Mr Collier,

Yours truly yours,

Richard Hooper.

